



# The Ferris State Torch

94 YEARS OF ILLUMINATING THE TRUTH

Big Rapids, Michigan

Week of March 19 - 26, 2025

www.fsutorch.com

## Student protest rights at risk

### How Ferris feels about the new federal funding plans



Archive photo by: Jordan Wilson | Multimedia Editor

Tensions between Palestine and Israel led students to protest outside of the David L. Eisler Center in 2023.

**Kate Babel**  
News Reporter

President Donald Trump's comments and actions over student protests and the detainment of a student organizer in New York have stirred concern for the future of university-based protesting.

Following a summer of protests at and around U.S. universities, Trump has threatened any institutions that "allows for illegal protests," specifically ones that he feels are antisemitic or "pro-Hamas" according to AP News.

Columbia University, a private university in New York, has been the target of Trump's action, as the school had 400 million dollars of federal funds canceled by the Trump administration.

Universities around the country, which includes Co-

lumbia, had students protesting Israel's actions in Gaza with calls for their schools to divest from Israel. Some of these demonstrations included starting encampments on university property.

This current crackdown has resulted in pro-Palestinian student protestors fleeing the country, while others like Columbia alum and student organizer Mahmoud Khalil have been arrested.

Ferris political science professor David Takitaki contests the legality of Trump's actions.

"I don't believe this is what would be an official policy of the United States government," Takitaki said. "It is the president of the United States, attempting to alter the behavior of law-abiding Americans by making threats against educational institutions against students who

are here on foreign visas against people who would be afraid that using their First Amendment rights would result in their expulsion from institutions that they attend. None of that falls within the powers of the executive under the constitution."

Takitaki also explained that the actions violate the principles of the First Amendment right to freedom of speech and the separation of powers created by Congress.

Khalil's detainment by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is not the only arrest to be made about the Columbia protests. However, Khalil's deportation has been blocked by a U.S. district court judge.

Ferris has not been a hotbed of political activity but back in November of 2023, students rallied in favor of both pro-Israel and pro-Pal-

estine sentiments.

When it comes to the right to protest, students at Ferris expressed the importance of having the right to do so.

Pre-pharmacy sophomore Bobby Snell questions how there can be societal change without organizing.

"It's important. If they can't protest, then how is there going to be change," Snell said. "Especially for people that want to seek change, or they see something that needs to be changed. I feel like that's one of the only ways that they have, at least places like a campus, that they can get a change."

Trump's new higher-education-based controversy comes after his administration vowed to rid the country of diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives. This has since impacted universities in the country, just like the "illegal

protests" cuts.

Fifty miles from Ferris, Grand Valley State University has been home to a few student protests regarding ICE, divestment and Palestine.

Health communications junior and Grand Valley Progressive Student Union member Owen Frassetto emphasized that despite Trump's actions, student activists should not be fearful.

"The effect of Trump's post is a dangerous one, it communicates his intention to wage a political war on the student movement," Frassetto said. "I don't think we as students should be afraid or hide away in a political sense, but should stand up and fight back against Trump's agenda."

Most recently, PSU organized against a conservative speaker who had detransitioned.

Like other universities, students at Ferris value their right to assemble. Ideas like this were expressed by technical and professional communications junior Carly Hedlund.

"As a student, regardless of whether I choose to participate in protests or not, I do not want to see the right to protest on campus be taken away," Hedlund said. "I think Trump really only cares about blocking protests that go against what he believes in, it is just ridiculous overall in my opinion that the right to protest could be infringed upon simply because the president does not like it."

As the country grapples with student protest rights and the detainment of student activists, Ferris students have been firm in their beliefs about their rights.

## News

The new residence hall set to be built next to Top Taggart Field had its groundbreaking earlier this week. **PG. 2**

## Culture

Bulldogs made the most of spring break, from staying home, exploring new destinations, relaxing and enjoying well-deserved time off. **PG. 5**

## Opinions

Cancer patient reflects on potential for federal medical research cuts and cuts to the U.S. Agency for International Development. **PG. 9**

## Sports

Senior Alessandro Santangelo is the lone senior of the men's tennis team. Read more about his thoughts on his final season as a Bulldog. **PG. 10**

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# News

Ember St. Amour | News Editor | stamoue@ferris.edu

## Michigan

Ember St. Amour  
News Editor

An alligator was left in a motel room in Northern Michigan on March 13.

The alligator was accidentally left at the Pine River Motel in Cheboygan after visiting an elementary school with its handler, according to the Detroit Free Press.

The animal was found by the motel owner, who then called the police.

The handler was back in Detroit when he received the call from the motel and turned around to grab the animal. The handler explained that he had believed the animal had escaped.

## National

Ember St. Amour  
News Editor

**Southern U.S.** - A storm system has worked its way through the nation over the past week.

According to the New York Times, Tornadoes, dust storms and wildfires were all part of the storm system that destroyed communities.

There were roughly 100 tornadoes over two days, with some towns being hit several times.

As of Monday, March 17, there have been 40 deaths from the effects of these natural disasters.

## Global

Ember St. Amour  
News Editor

**Yemen** - Houthi rebels claim that the US has launched a strike against them, killing 53 people on Saturday.

Since November 2023, the Houthi have targeted merchant ships, along with smaller ships, causing them to sink and killing four, according to BBC News.

U.S. National Security Advisor Michael Waltz said that the strikes hit multiple Houthi leaders that they were targeting.

## Residence hall breaks ground

38-million dollar hall begins groundbreaking



Photo by: Jordan Wilson | Multimedia Editor

**The construction is estimated to take three years to complete and preparations have already begun, with tree removal being the most visible.**

Ember St. Amour  
News Editor

Monday, March 17 marked the groundbreaking of the new residence hall, which brought together board members, deans and other community members.

The 38-million dollar building will be the first new residence hall on campus since North Hall was built in 2017. The hall, which will be built on the sidelines of the football field, will allow residents the view of the game.

At the ceremony, Vice President of Advancement Marketing and Executive Director of the Ferris Foundation Kathy Mullins, Board of Trustees Vice President Mike Fisher, President Dr. Bill Pink and Dean of Student Life Lina Blair gave speeches about their expectations for the hall.

Pink spoke on the impact he hopes the new residence hall will have on campus.

"This is what Ferris State is doing in Michigan. This is one of those things that, honestly, with how we are situating this residence hall, there's reason behind the madness because not only is it the beginning of another residence hall to have our students live in comfortably, but it is also the

beginning of what we look at, as far as this footprint is concerned, of Top Taggart Field," Pink said. "This be that first step to show our community, show our country, show our alumni, show our students say, 'Yes, it is time that Ferris State is indeed looking at what the footprint of this university looks like.'"

Pink also highlighted that he believes that the building being in the center of campus will be beneficial for students.

The goal of the residence hall isn't just about adding more rooms to campus.

"This is why the project that we are celebrating today is so important, because it marks the first of several buildings like this that will be housed on this campus, and as I've said to people, I'm not focused on adding beds to our campus. I'm focused on replacing beds," Pink said. "I'm focused on our students being able to live in spaces that are complementary and challenge any other institution in this country, as far as where they live. Now I obviously I understand that we've got spaces that are going to take longer for us to replace."

Most of the current residence halls on campus are from the 1960s.

There was also hope that

the new hall would allow students to build on campus connections that would make them feel like they belong.

Blair, who uses they/them pronouns, spoke on their vision for student life in the new hall.

"They're going to be close to the athletic action that's pretty exciting, to explore their passions, to challenge their assumptions about the world and to hopefully find themselves," Blair said. "They

might even feel like they're living in a place that they never envisioned for themselves. I think about common areas that are super busy and buzzing with lots of conversations study notes that are fostering collaboration and quiet corners where students can reflect."

The hall is scheduled to open in the fall 2026. The name of the new hall has yet to be decided.

## Ferris State Torch Corrections

**In the March 12 edition of the Torch, the article "Politics and culture at Ferris" includes a sub-headline that contains a typo. It should read "The disconnect between political beliefs and real life."**

**In the same edition of the Torch, the article "Politics and culture at Ferris" includes an ending that is cutoff. It should have ended with "Despite varying beliefs, it is evident that what students value most is keeping an open mind and being able to discuss politics and culture with kindness and respect."**

Corrections can be submitted through email at [torch@ferris.edu](mailto:torch@ferris.edu)

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the full academic calendar.



[ferris.edu/academics/calendars](https://ferris.edu/academics/calendars)

**Monday, March 24**  
Fall registration begins.

**Thursday, March 27**  
Last day to withdraw  
from full semester.

**Thursday, April 17–Sunday, April 20**  
Mid-semester recess. Classes  
resume Monday, April 21.

**Friday, May 2**  
Last day of classes for  
Spring 2025 semester.

**Monday, May 5–Friday, May 9**  
Exam week.

# News briefs

## First-Gen recognition

Ember St. Amour  
News Editor

Ferris was recognized for being one of 18 institutions chosen for the First-Gen Forward Champions.

The First-Gen Forward program recognizes institutions for being nation leaders in advancing the amount of First generation students who complete higher education.

There are 429 institutions that are a part of the program.

The program uses three phases to increase First-Gen student success. The three stages include Network Member, Network Leader and Network Champion, meaning that Ferris is in the final phase of the program.

## New bargain store

Ember St. Amour  
News Editor

The old Big Lots building has been occupied with Ollie's Bargain Outlet, which had its grand opening on March 19.

The location is one of 574 according to the companies website. The store offers discounted items including those that have been discontinued, over stocked and items from liquidated stores.

The store is open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday.

## New tattoo and piercing shop

Ember St. Amour  
News Editor

A new tattoo and piercing shop is set to have their soft opening on March 21.

The shop, Treetop Tattoo, announced a soft opening on Facebook and Instagram.

Former Lighttouch piercer, Jared Waffle is the owner of the shop.

The soft opening will take place from 12 p.m. to 8p.m. and the shop will offer full service on both tattoos and piercings according to the social media posts.

The shop is located at 732 Perry Ave, located at the plaza near Applebees.

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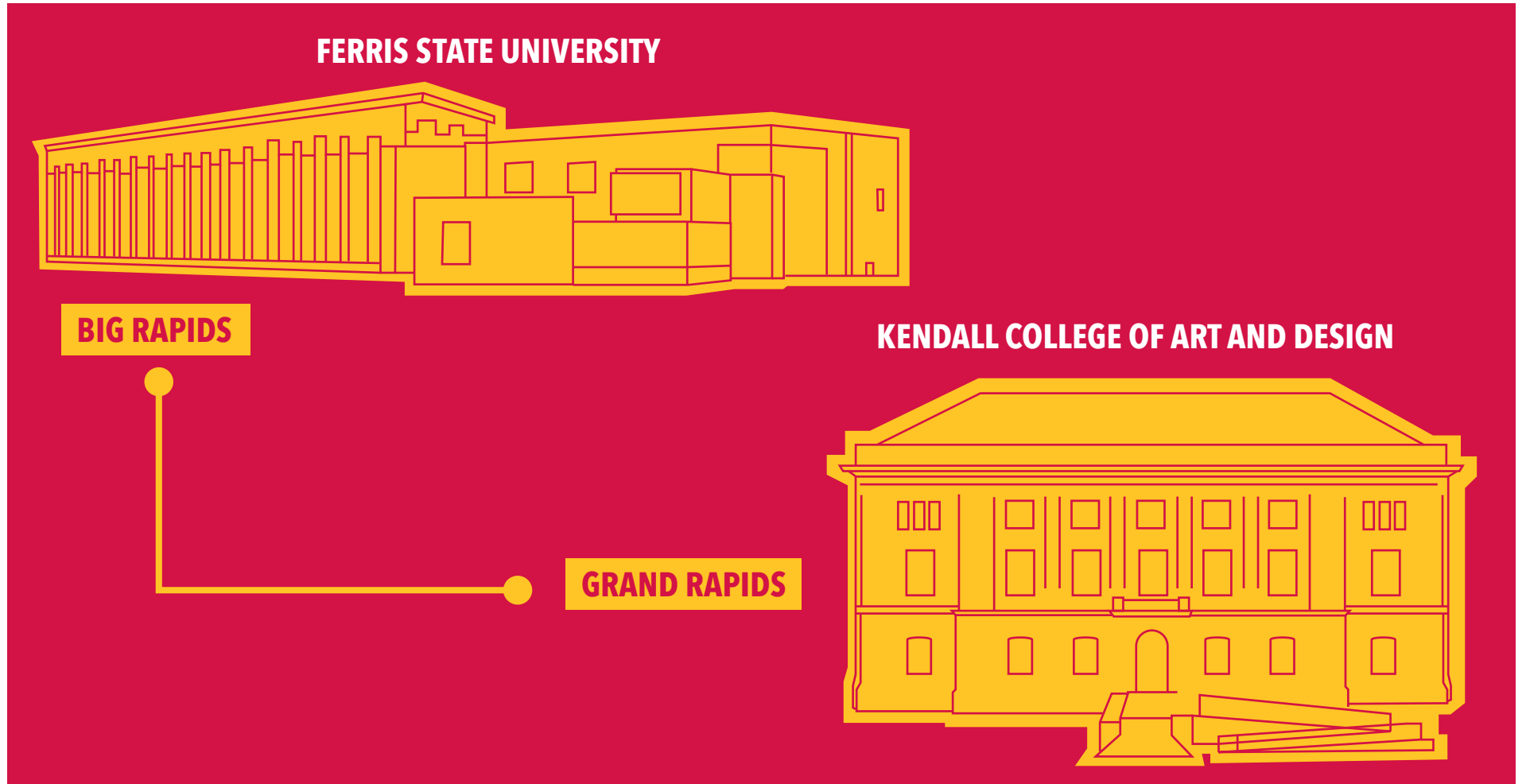


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# Kendall College to integrate with Ferris

Art and design majors shift college locations



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

**Emma Walters**  
Freelance Reporter

Ferris has announced that the Kendall College of Art and Design will become the university's official art and design college.

This change came after a 24-year partnership between FSU and KCAD.

KCAD merged with FSU in 2001 but continued operating separately from the university.

The "Kendall" name will remain with the college throughout this transition. The new official title is Ferris State University's Kendall College of Art and Design.

Early last fall, the KCAD building in Grand Rapids became home to the Student

Success Hub, providing students with greater Ferris resources.

Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications David Murray stated that this change will help Ferris expand its presence in West Michigan.

"The move fits with the university's 'One Ferris State' philosophy, with several locations with a shared mission and approach," Murray said. "One goal is to align both academics and operations. For example, KCAD classes could also potentially be taught on the main campus."

Murray further stated that this transition is still in the early stages, with details will continue to be coordinated in the months ahead.

Discussions continue about how the Grand Rapids KCAD campus will be utilized following this transition.

One option the university has explored is offering more opportunities at the KCAD campus that are seen on the main Big Rapids campus.

Murray also mentioned the possibility of expanding courses offered at the Grand Rapids Campus.

KCAD was originally founded in 1928 as a private art academy. The founder, David Wolcott Kendall, was a nationally known furniture designer, with Grand Rapids being the center of the industry at that time.

Graphic media management junior Drew Gendron-Wesley stated that the

initial announcement of KCAD becoming Ferris left students in the unknown.

"When it was first brought to my attention, we were all kind of freaking out a bit," Gendron-Wesley said. "They're not really getting student input, especially since it affects us the most. Are we getting new professors? Are they merging the programs? Is the curriculum different?"

Gendron-Wesley was previously a graphic design major but switched to graphic media management. Despite the switch, Wesley stated that it is still unknown whether the university change will affect his new program.

Despite the confusion from students, Wesley mentioned that KCAD, as an official part

of Ferris, could bring a broader audience to the art gallery and other events hosted by students in creative fields.

"Being branded under Ferris can broaden a lot of people's networking," Gendron-Wesley said. "Having Ferris support can let us do more."

KCAD has been the latest addition to programs Ferris offers in Grand Rapids, with the College of Pharmacy program located on Medical Mile and several other programs offered in partnership with Grand Rapids Community College.

Design junior Emma Eling is excited to see what this transition will offer students in creative programs and networking opportunities.

"I think this will help make us a bigger community. I think design is kind of underrepresented," Eling said. "There's not a lot of opportunity at the career fair for design students. We still go, we still show up, but there's not a lot for us. I think the merge will make us a bigger force."

Eling also explained that the resources made available by a merger with KCAD may give students more to work with creatively and bring about opportunities to learn about the physicality of design.

Ferris has not announced what courses will be offered on the main campus or in Grand Rapids. Students can expect more information in the months to come.

## ON THE RECORD

Ember St. Amour  
News Editor

### False alarm

March 11, 3:45 a.m. - An employee accidentally sent off the alarm when entering the Katke Golf Course. The employee then input the wrong alarm code, so officers responded to verify that everything was good.

### DWI driver

March 13, 9:57 p.m. - Officers did a traffic stop after a vehicle violated several traffic rules. The driver was found to have multiple warrants, including a parole violation, and was intoxicated. The driver was arrested for driving while intoxicated.

### Stop and caught

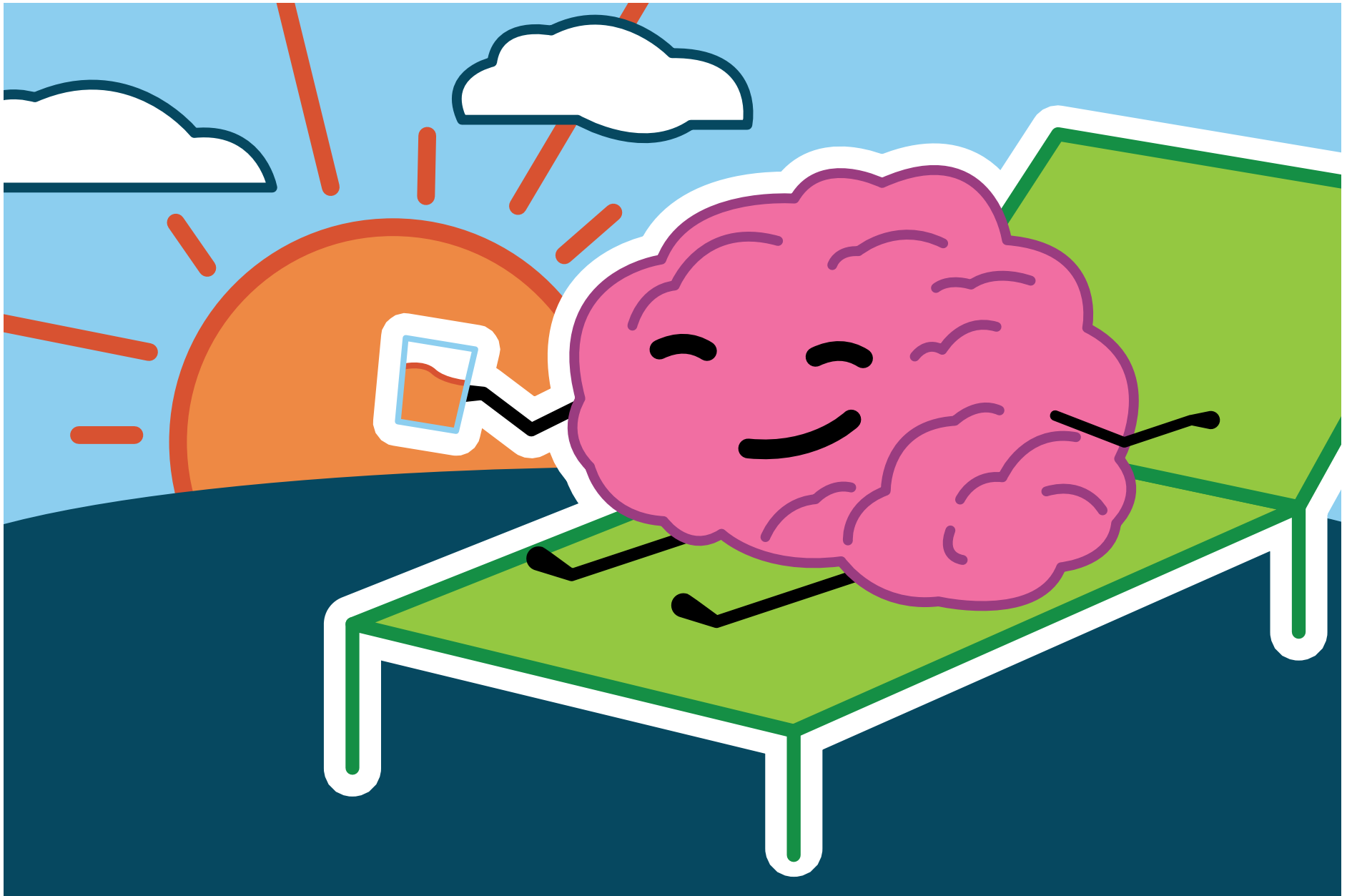
March 13, 5:20 p.m. - Officers made contact with a vehicle parked in the middle of the road. They observed that there was an open bottle of vodka in the back seat and that both the driver and passenger were underage. They were cited for being a minor in possession.

# Culture

Blase Gapinski | Culture Editor | gapinsb@ferris.edu

## Bulldogs on spring break

Students find various ways to enjoy their week off of classes



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

**Tate Zellman**  
Freelance Reporter

To enjoy spring break, students do what's best for them, whether that's taking a break from school or focusing on their mental and physical health.

During their week off, students didn't have to stay on campus and attend their classes. Regardless of how students decided to spend their time off during their break, it was an opportunity to enjoy themselves and relax.

Many students plan to travel somewhere, whether that be traveling to see family, traveling to a different state or going overseas to explore someplace out of the country.

Secondary English education junior Breanna Wright traveled for spring break, allowing her to get away from school.

"I am traveling this year," Wright said. "I am going to

Fort Lauderdale in Florida. I have traveled during all three years of college because I think it's important to get away from the school aspect to relax. We don't really get an opportunity to do fun things like this after college, so I make sure I am able to have a fun trip every year."

Wright believes that traveling was the best way for her to enjoy her spring break, and she chose Florida because she enjoys the warm weather.

As fun as traveling can be, there are quite a few students who prefer not to travel for their spring break. Some prefer staying home to have some more relaxation.

Secondary English education sophomore Isabelle Johnson found that staying home for spring break was best for her in terms of taking a break from school and focusing on her physical and mental health.

"It was best for me to stay home and relax during spring

break for a mental health reset," Johnson said. "Although it would have been nice to travel, staying home created a stress-free environment where I could relax and focus on myself rather than homework or my classes."

Johnson also said that staying home helped her to get some work hours in and used it as a chance to get ahead on some of her major assignments. She also has a full-time job on top of her studies, so it would have been difficult to find time to travel.

The workload of college classes can encourage students to enjoy spring break more and not worry about anything school-related until the break is over. However, the workload from classes is not the primary reason every student looks forward to spring break.

Facilities management senior Carson Vanderhoff used the break as a time to get away from class work as

his professors didn't assign additional work.

"I don't think there's a correlation between the workload and the enjoyment of spring break," Vanderhoff said. "I say that because I think most professors don't give work over break, so it's a given that your mind gets a break."

While students may not get much work during break, they could receive assignments the weekend they leave home or the weekend before classes resume. Not

only that, but students could have exams, tests or reviews that come up right after they return from break.

Television and digital media production sophomore Rockne Smith finds it important for students not to worry about school material during spring break.

"I believe it's beneficial for students to take a break from academic worries during spring break," Smith said. "With the end of the semester approaching, this week off provides an excel-

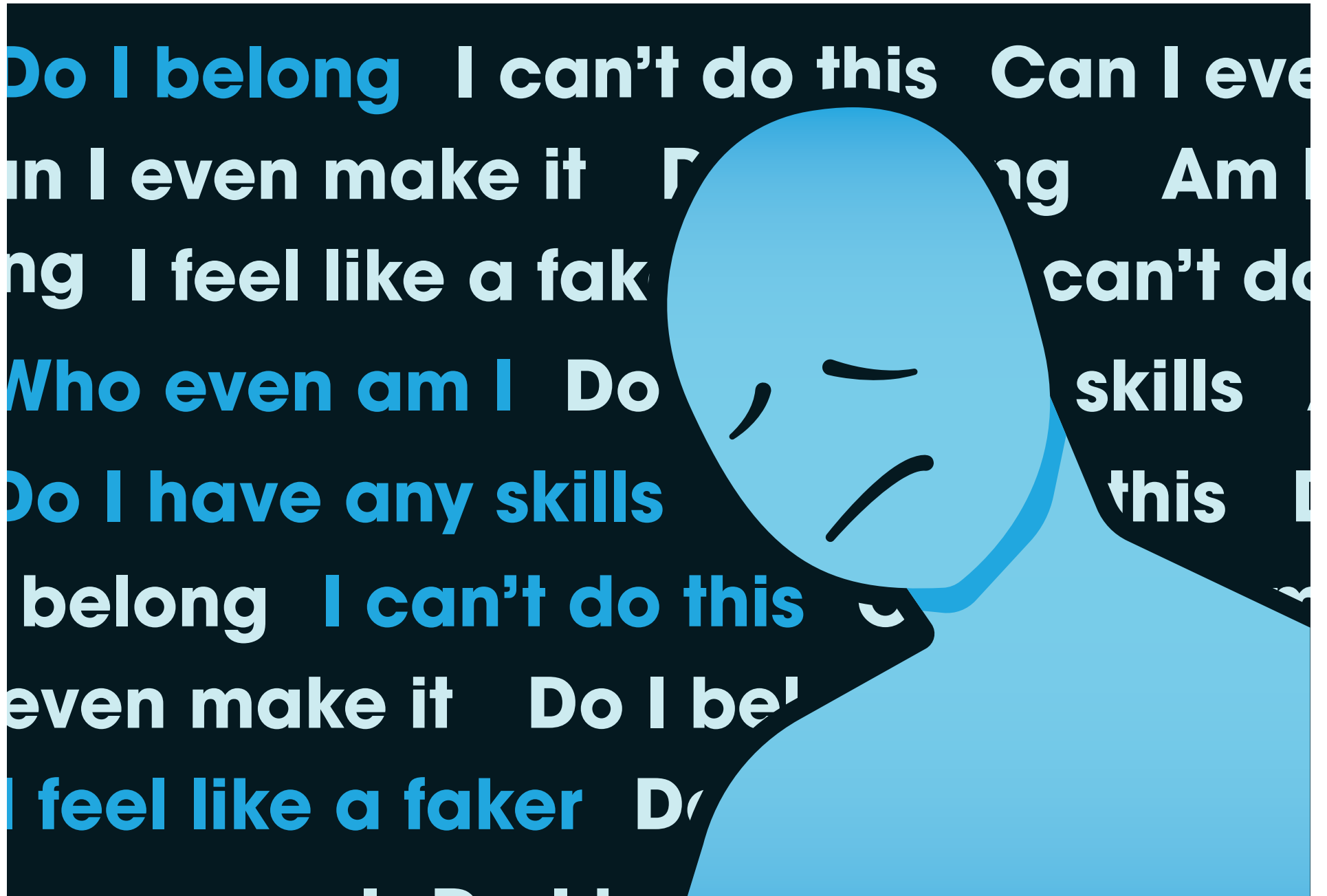
lent opportunity for students to recharge, allowing them to finish strong in all their classes."

No matter how students decide to spend their break, it's always essential to prioritize relaxation and self-care. After all, everyone deserves time to recharge for the challenges ahead and to have enjoyed a week off before the remainder of the semester.

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# Navigating imposter syndrome

Insights and advice from Ferris students



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

**Grace Heethuis**  
Culture Reporter

Imposter syndrome has been a growing issue among university students in recent years as mental health issues have worsened.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a massive decline in the mental health of students of all ages because of the major changes that took place so quickly.

According to the World Health Organization, in the first year of the pandemic, depression and anxiety increased by 25% worldwide.

Among the mental health issues that are so prevalent in our society right now is imposter syndrome. It is especially common among high school and college students.

Many students have their own definitions of imposter syndrome and have expressed how it has made them feel.

Industrial chemistry senior Juan Pablo Morales revealed what imposter syndrome feels like to him.

"Definitely not feeling smart enough," Morales said. "I also think it makes you doubt a lot of your abili-

ties once you get to the workforce."

Imposter syndrome is "the persistent inability to believe that one's success is deserved or has been legitimately achieved as a result of one's own efforts or skills."

Countless college students have, at some point in time, felt inferior to their peers. These feelings are especially prevalent in upper-level classes, where the class material is often more challenging.

Computer information systems junior Vincent Yeboah shared his view of the prevalence of imposter syndrome.

"I think everyone does [experience imposter syndrome] at some point," Yeboah said.

Many Ferris students have experienced feeling detached from the Ferris community.

Communication studies sophomore Trinity Metsaars reflected on a time when one of her friends shared the same sentiment.

"She did not feel like she belonged at all. Even though she had friends, there just wasn't that support within the friendship," Metsaars said.

Her friend ended up leaving college last semester, shortly after having talked

about these struggles.

The feeling of "faking it 'till you make it" is a reality for many students. It appears to some students that others know what they're doing, but this isn't necessarily true. Metsaars can attest to that feeling.

"I sometimes feel like I'm the dumbest one. [In class] everyone's nodding along like they understand and I feel lost," Metsaars said.

While these feelings of inferiority can be temporary and eventually overcome, it is important to recognize them and take action.

When left unresolved, the intense emotions accompanying imposter syndrome can become too much to bear.

Because so many college students have known what it feels like to suffer from imposter syndrome, they are filled with wisdom about what to do when these feelings arise.

"Stay true to yourself and always encourage yourself," Yeboah said.

While this can be difficult to do, it can be effective. Words of affirmation and taking care of your mental health are extremely import-

ant, especially in college.

Imposter syndrome can be an easy trap, especially with the disconnection and social isolation that have become so prevalent since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Other students, like Morales, offered advice on how to overcome feeling alone in your problems and realize that college is a place to learn, not stay silent when you need help.

"Hear other people," Morales said. "Something a professor told me once is if you're struggling, chances are everybody else is struggling, so you're not the only one."

According to McLean Hospital, one of the best ways to overcome imposter syndrome is to open up and discuss self-doubt with people you trust.

While imposter syndrome is currently common in college students, there is hope that it won't be so prevalent in the future.

With the right tools to succeed, such as a good support system and self-care routine, imposter syndrome can become easier to cope with.

## Heard on Campus

"Nah man, I swear to god I wasn't dishonorably discharged, but my uncle was."

Hear something funny on campus? DM us on Instagram @fsutorch for your submission to be possibly featured

# Shamrocks and spirits

Star Shooters' St. Patrick's Day celebration



Photo by: Jordan Wilson | Multimedia Editor

College students head to Star Shooters to enjoy music and spirits while donning green during St. Patrick's day celebrations.

**Blase Gapinski**  
Culture Editor

St. Patrick's Day has become one of the most hallowed holidays, a time when college students can let loose, party and in Big Rapids, this has almost become a norm for that sacred spring day.

Star Shooters has become one of the local hotspots on St. Patrick's Day. With early opening hours, a souvenir mug that unlocks deals for the whole day and free breakfast for the first 50 inside it makes it the perfect place for the community and students to celebrate.

For many, celebrating St. Patrick's Day at Star Shooters has become a tradition at Ferris.

Marketing senior Payton Husted woke up early for this year's holiday to celebrate her last St. Patrick's Day as a student.

"I really am mourning my last one," Husted said. "I've come to Shooter's all four years of being here and it is always a fun time and just such a good memory."

Students use this day as a kickback to come together and enjoy heartfelt times with one another over green drinks and partying.

Husted encouraged others to get out and celebrate, pointing out that this level of freedom only comes during college. As a student, she made sure to attend all of her morning classes even though some of her friends decided to opt out for the day.

"You're only this age once," Husted said. "I feel like after college if St. Patrick's Day is on a Monday, you have to go to work, you can't just skip that."

One of the main reasons Husted has continued to come to Star Shooters for St. Patrick's Day is the cheerful staff.

Mosella Hunt a long term Star Shooters employee who locals mainly know as Mississippi, always looks forward to working on this particular day despite the busy environment.

"Everyone is just in a very happy mood," Hunt said. "We start early in the morning, we go late and no matter the weather everyone is smiling and it is a joyful day."

This marks Hunt's sixth St. Patrick's Day at Star Shooters, and she emphasized how it has become a tradition for past and present employees to come together, share lunch and enjoy the atmosphere.

"We try to really see how

long we can physically stay in the building on St. Patrick's Day," Hunt said. "The morale is usually really high as you will see us behind the bar playing around with each other or having our karaoke moments."

Hunt mentioned how the holidays and long weekends bring out a mixed crowd as locals know Star Shooters as a hidden gem for food. Since many students spend St. Patrick's Day out and about, it gives those spending it at Star Shooters a chance to explore their menu.

"It's something people need to experience no matter if you are drinking or not," Hunt said. "The momentum gets going and the energy is contagious. This place is typically seen as a college bar when in reality, we have customers that are in their 80s that still come here and love it."

Marketing senior Daniel Revord knows all about the energy at Star Shooters and would have been there sooner if he didn't have to work beforehand.

"There are a few holidays during the year that really feel like the whole point is to drink," Revord said. "This is the perfect opportunity to do just that because even the

bar opened at seven o'clock this morning, so it feels like a non-negotiable thing you lean into and show up."

For Revord, work and school had to come first, but once he got that out of the way, he knew he had to go out and celebrate with

friends.

"Every year, it is something I love to be a part of and I couldn't see myself missing it," Revord said. "To those who are missing class to be here, that is no easy feat but one day isn't going to ruin the world, right?"

As the festivities at Star Shooters came to a close, the morale from the St. Patrick's Day celebration lingered on as locals and students worked away until the next long weekend.

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# Opinions

Jackie Moglia | Opinions Editor | [mogliaj@ferris.edu](mailto:mogliaj@ferris.edu)

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## EDITOR'S COLUMN:

# Spring break without breaking the budget

How I've enjoyed my spring breaks while being cheap



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

**Dylan Rider**  
*Editor in Chief*

My spring break vacations have varied over the years.

A trip to Florida, staying at home, a two-day trip to West Virginia and Ohio and then a simple trip to Detroit have made up my breaks.

All of the aforementioned destinations are different. However, all of them share one key similarity: cheapness.

I'm a frugal man. Financial anxiety is the bane of my existence. On the opposite side of this, I desire to see the world. I absolutely love to travel.

Cheapness and travel do not go hand-in-hand. Airfare, gas and any other means of travel will run you a bill dependent on your destination. Even if they don't, you have to consider where you'll stay, where you'll eat and where you'll drink.

If you're anything like me, this process may be familiar: I get an idea of a trip. I'll start looking at travel expenses and begin to sour on the idea when the prices start rising. When I push myself past the doubt by saying "It's just money," the hotel cost puts the nail in the coffin, settling the debate.

It's a brutal process. Going broke might be the one thing that will always scare me. Despite this, I've made my way around the country and have done incredibly fun things.

I mentioned a trip to West Virginia and Ohio. This is my shining achievement of being cheap but still doing things. Those states are the farthest thing from the usual spring break destination. However, the road trip crossed off a bucket list destination with Point Pleasant, W.Va, allowing me to attend a Columbus Blue Jackets game in Ohio.

When all was said and done, the trip for myself and my travel buddy was just under 200 dollars.

Was it glorious? No. Was it inexpensive and scratched the travel itch for that time? Absolutely.

Even with this past week's break, I was able to get out and have a little fun. A couple of the Torch editors and I headed down to Detroit for a Pistons game.

It's not a luxurious week on the beach. But, it's simple and, again, cheap.

Don't get me wrong. There's nothing wrong with testing the limits of your bank account. Perhaps money isn't an issue of yours. I envy you.

How students use their breaks is so intriguing to me. You have the vacationers, the people who are heading south for warmer weather and better views. There are the grinders, the folks who

use their week off to build the bank account instead of drain it. Then there's my camp this year, the do-nothings.

Yes, I went to Detroit. But I've sat at home for most of it. I've filled my days doing small chores around the apartment and playing video games. It's a bit mind-numbing.

I also feel like I betrayed the purpose of spring break. What I did was boring. I passed on a trip to Nashville to go to a Pistons game and stay at home. I can admit that's a little absurd on my part. On the other hand, my wallet is better off. I definitely could've done more. Maybe I should've.

Is it so bad that I didn't though? My last college spring break was spent at home. Yeah, it's lame, but the spring break police aren't coming to get me. Maybe I shouldn't feel so bad about

it. It's a case of FOMO that I'll move past.

For those who have spring breaks left and share the same financial mindset as me, I implore you to break through it. Save up. Take a cheap trip that won't endanger your livelihood. The experience alone is worth it.

However, it's easier said than done. To those who will enjoy and did enjoy their break sitting at home, it's nothing to feel guilty about. You probably saved yourself a couple of pennies.

Spring break is a subjective thing. It is a literal break from the university. Whatever you do for it is up to you. Make it up as you go or have a plan months ahead. Whatever you do, just make sure it emphasizes the "break" part.



# Is my life worth the money?

## Fearing federal threats to medical research as a cancer patient

Sam Mulder  
Torch Photographer

I am angry, scared and helpless.

I'm afraid Donald Trump and the Republican party think that my life, and the lives of others with chronic disease, are a waste. I am terrified that Elon Musk may cut funding for research that could save my life and that the newly appointed HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. may destroy public trust and support for scientific understanding.

When I was 16, I was diagnosed with epithelioid hemangioendothelioma. EHE is a rare, incurable cancer of the lining of blood vessels. One in a million people worldwide will be diagnosed with EHE, and half of those diagnosed will die from the disease within five years. I am now 22, which makes me one of the survivors of that coin toss. However, my cancer is still progressing.

I have over a dozen lesions in my liver and nodules in my lungs. With these tumors come chronic pain and inflammation in my ribs and back. There is no treatment available to me to combat the EHE in my body. Medications that have worked for others have not worked for me.

I am relying on cutting-edge medical research to save my life. Because EHE is so rare, it is unlikely that a private pharmaceutical company will bankroll clinical trials because they won't have

enough customers to turn a profit. For rare diseases like mine, publicly funded studies may be the only avenue for progress. Federal funding saves lives, and Trump and Musk look to cut it.

Musk's strategy of moving fast and breaking things may work in business, but not in public health. Musk stated that if he makes a mistake, his team will work to fix it. However, as has been seen with cuts to U.S. Agency for International Development, temporary halts to funding can cause irreparable harm.

Musk and Trump also have little to no understanding of what they are cutting. In Trump's joint address to Congress, he incorrectly stated that they had cut funding for "transgender mice." What they cut, however, was a study involving transgenic mice that have altered DNA. The specific studies the White House referenced involved how hormones affect, among other things, asthma and breast cancer.

Studies working towards saving the lives of people like me might be cut without thorough consideration or compassion. I have little trust in Kennedy to stand up against public health cuts or to defend scientific understanding. He has already shown that he is willing to roll over and allow Musk and Trump to do what they wish.

Kennedy also stated that he wants to see a halt to all infectious disease research. Not only would this put the

American people at higher risk of sickness and death, but infectious disease research also has a broader impact. Cancer research has been propelled by scientific understanding gained from research into retroviral treatments for HIV and mRNA vaccines for COVID-19. A pause in any area of medical research will hurt all areas of medical research.

The United States has also left the World Health Organization. For such a rare disease like EHE, international cooperation is paramount to building a sample size of patients large enough to study. The WHO is built for international cooperation, and leaving it may mean that cancer research and understanding will slow.

I am anxious about the state of our country, and I am angry at those who are unwilling to oppose the actions our government is taking. I am irate that my mostly conservative community back home in West Michigan overwhelmingly supports the Republican party when I know personally that they are extremely compassionate and supportive of those who are sick.

I am mad that my Republican representative in the House won't stand up for me. I am also baffled that House Republicans are willing to pass Trump's budget resolution that would require cuts to Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security, which are programs I know politicians and citizens on both sides of

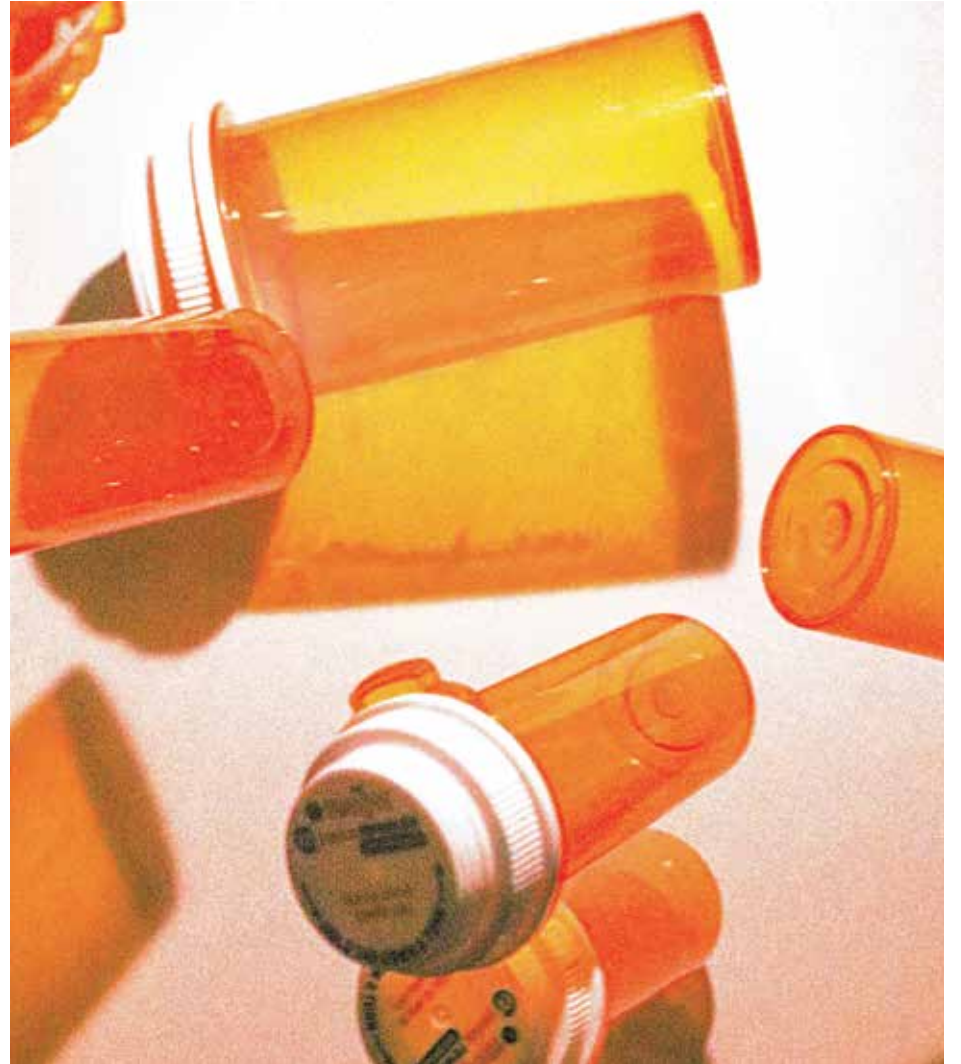


Photo by: Sam Mulder | Torch Photographer

**Cuts to medical research funding are putting those with currently untreatable diseases at risk.**

the aisle rely on and support.

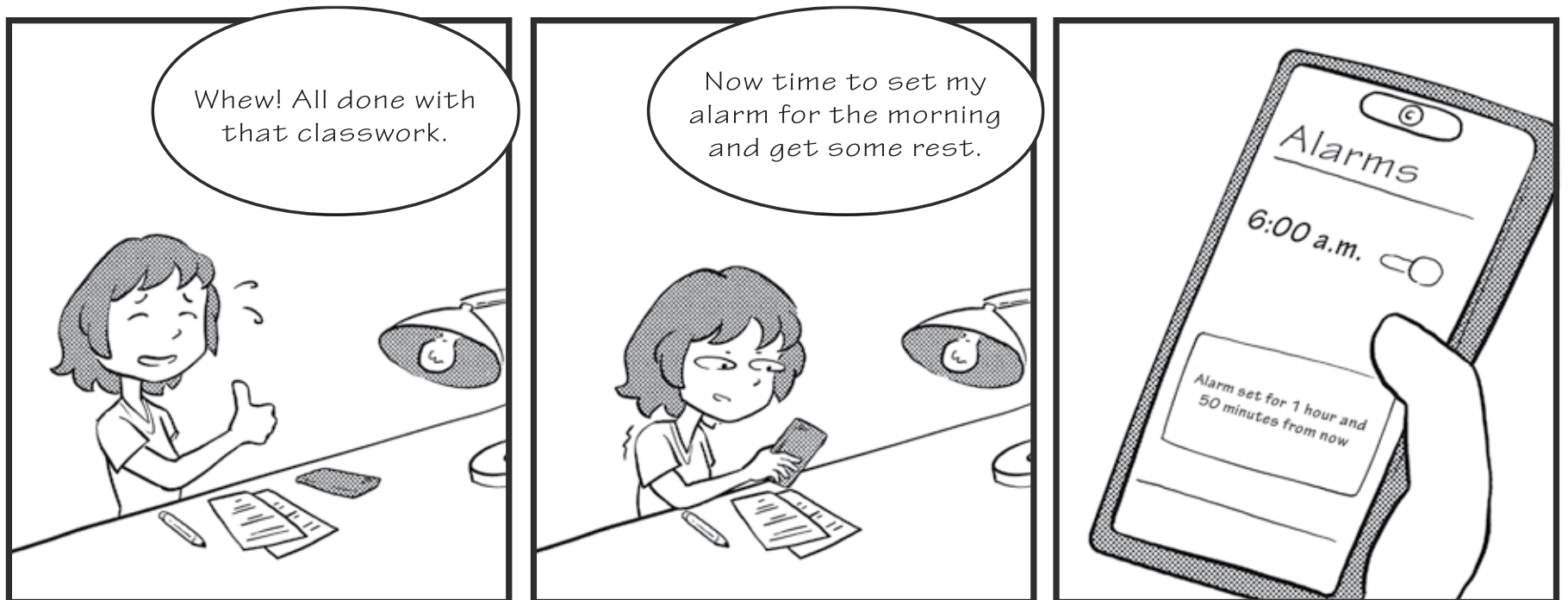
The Democratic minority in the House and Senate also seem to be willing to let this happen. While it may look good to hold signs during speeches, it is not an

effective opposition. They are either unwilling or unable to mount a unified response.

I hope people hear my story and think of those they love. This administration's actions will hurt people. I hope

our representatives stand up against this president and support the American people. Above all, I hope people begin to see that no amount of money is worth sacrificing lives.

# Sleep habits



Comic by: Blake Flanery | Cartoonist

# Sports

Connor Grypma | Sports Editor | grypma@ferris.edu

## Alessandro Santangelo's final rally

Senior captain tackles his final year at Ferris State



Archive photo by: Sam Mulder | Torch Photographer

Santangelo has contributed over 10 points to the Bulldogs lineup through 11 regular season matches.

**Devin Wardrop**  
Freelance Reporter

As the only senior on the men's tennis team, Alessandro Santangelo has become a leader for the underclassmen that he plays alongside.

The Georgetown, Ontario native is a second-generation Canadian. Santangelo gets his love for tennis from his mother, who put a racket in his hands at the age of three. Alessandro fell in love with the sport instantly and started playing in tournaments three years later.

Tennis wasn't the only sport Santangelo played, as he was in soccer until he was 13 when he realized he needed to focus on one

sport. He chose his bigger passion in tennis, and he's been playing ever since.

Santangelo says these experiences, and the three-and-a-half years of playing collegiate tennis, have helped him be the best leader possible for the underclassmen.

"I always try and share those experiences and stories with my teammates when it's due," Santangelo said. "It helps prevent them from making the same mistakes I did. We play for the love of the game, and there's nothing better than respect for the game. I see that in my opponents as well when Ferris plays other teams."

The choice to play colle-

giate tennis at Ferris was easy for Santangelo, as it's similar to that of his hometown. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Santangelo had a friend who went to Western Michigan who knew head coach Mark Doren, as well as the head coach at Grand Valley State. Santangelo joked that he made the correct decision not to pick Grand Valley while also stating that he loved the small town of Big Rapids, which was key in his decision.

The professional tennis management senior loves playing for Coach Doren and would like to assist him when his career at Ferris is done.

"It's been awesome," Santangelo said. "He's a

great coach and a great mentor. He gives a different perspective than other coaches I've had. He sees tennis differently. He knows when to have fun and he knows when to be serious. Doren and I relate so well, and this sport brings out the passion in me. I would love to be an assistant coach at Ferris right after I graduate, or maybe a grad position somewhere. College coaching is my passion and I see that in myself currently when I'm with my team."

Santangelo is always aware of the college tennis space, knowing what teams are ranked and who's new, whether a transfer or a freshman, from different social

media accounts.

Doren called Santangelo one of the most unique players he's ever coached at Ferris while also claiming that he's a "tennis geek" and that he "lives and breathes tennis."

"Over the past four years, I've leaned on Alessandro many times almost as an assistant coach," Doren said. "He knows everything about every team we play, and I get my scouting reports from him."

As a senior, Santangelo looks to finish strong on the court and in the classroom. He still has capstone classes and some matches, but he likes to keep working and never settles for less.

Freshman Adrian Catahan talked about the type of leader Santangelo is for the new players.

"He has been an amazing leader for the team," Catahan said. "He provides his experiences for the team and he's a big role model. He shows how passionate he is about tennis and how we can improve. He's like a big brother to us with his maturity and his fighting spirit."

Santangelo plays tennis for the love of the game, as he says going pro is difficult with how good the young players are. Playing collegiate tennis at a DII school is exactly what he needs to keep his love and passion for the sport.

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DUE: Wednesday, March 26, 2025

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# Golf aims to make deep postseason run

## Both teams look to build off successful fall seasons

**Caden Hofmann**  
Special Editions Editor

Both the men's and women's golf teams have enjoyed successful fall seasons, both being ranked within the top 50 in the country.

Now they prepare for an extensive spring portion of the season in preparation for conference and national tournaments.

### Men's

The men's golf team is coming off a national tournament appearance where they finished eighth in the country.

This year, the Bulldogs have had success during the fall season. They finished top-three in their first three matches, including a first-place finish in the Midwest Regional preview in St. Joseph, Miss.

In the most recent three matches, they have finished no lower than 12th. This level of play has given them a national rank of 48 up to this point in the season.

With the winter behind them and being a northern team, junior Drayton Cleaver is happy with their play against some of the best southern teams.

"As a northern team, this is the most difficult part of the season since we can't practice outdoors and have to travel a far ways away," Cleaver said. "As a team though, we took care of business over the winter, improved our weaknesses and honed in our strengths."

The travel will certainly get easier for Ferris in the coming weeks, only having to go as far as Indiana until the

regional tournament.

Cleaver believes that the fall matches have made them grow as a team.

"We are in a super confident place right now," Cleaver said. "We all have such a great bond with each other and the morale is at an all-time high."

The Bulldogs have played stiff competition early in the season and the team has not shied away.

Sophomore McCoy Biagioli thinks this competition has primed them for another deep run in May.

"We've put ourselves against the best teams in the country and it shows us that we can compete with anybody when we have our best game," Biagioli said. "As a group, we just have to continue to do the little things right and just grind it out. Our core group was able to learn a lot from last year's postseason run and we are ready to do the same come May."

Biagioli is coming off winning the GLIAC Freshman of the Year and has been the Bulldog's No.1 golfer this season.

With only two events until the GLIAC championships, Ferris's next match will be Monday, March 31 at the Indianapolis Intercollegiate in Laconia, Ind.

### Women's

The women's golf team has also been successful this fall season, finishing at least top-10 in each of their matches, which is good enough to be ranked No. 36 in the national poll.

The women have also had to travel early in the season and have faced the challeng-



Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics

**McCoy Biagioli, a previous GLIAC Freshman of the year winner, keeps his focus on improving.**

es that come with it but have used that to become closer as a team says freshman Ashley Thomasma.

"Obviously we are not able to practice on an actual course as much as we would like to but being together all the time on the road has benefited us," Thomasma said. "I love how we have played on the road and I think that the travel will help us down the road as we get ready for the postseason."

Ferris' strong fall season was powered by junior Kamryn Shannon who finished at the top of the Bulldogs' leaderboard in five out of the six matches they partook in. Shannon's strong start was led by a team-best score of 68 in the second round of the Gilda's Club Laker Fall Invite on Oct. 6.

The Bulldogs are coming off of a season where they finished seventh in the east regional, and they are

certainly looking to improve upon that come the postseason.

They have three more matches before the postseason, including a trip down to Missouri in April for the UMSL Spring Invitational. The women kicked off their spring season at UCSB Intercollegiate and now take on the Indianapolis Intercollegiate starting March 31.

The team likes how they have played up to this point,

but Thomasma says that work is never finished.

"What we have done so far has been awesome," Thomasma said. "We still have a lot of work to do if we want to make it far in the postseason, we are just trying to get better with each day and each match."

Both teams have looked great up to this point, and both hold aspirations of making the national tournament.

## Bulldogs go pro

### Four Ferris hockey players enter ECHL

**Connor Grypma**  
Sports Editor

Following the conclusion of the Bulldog hockey season, four former Ferris hockey players have signed with the East Coast Hockey League.

The ECHL is one of the premier minor leagues in American hockey and sits a tier below the American Hockey League.

On Tuesday, March 11, senior Andrew Noel was the first to join the pros, signing with the Cincinnati Cyclones, the ECHL affiliate of the Toronto Maple Leafs. Noel has

played in two games for the Cyclones so far.

On Friday, March 14, senior Kaleb Ergang signed with the Adirondack Thunder, the ECHL affiliate of the New Jersey Devils. Ergang finished third on the team in scoring this past season, posting 21 points (6-15-21).

Ergang made his Thunder debut the following night and scored two goals in his professional debut against the Maine Mariners.

Shortly after, goaltender Noah West signed with the Kansas City Mavericks, the affiliate of the Seattle Kraken.

West has already started two games for the Mavericks, earning wins in both with a 2.39 goals-against average.

Finally, on Monday, March 17, senior Zach Faremouth signed with the Reading Royals, the ECHL affiliate of the Philadelphia Flyers.

For further updates on the Bulldog hockey offseason, visit [fsutorch.com/category/sports/hockey/](http://fsutorch.com/category/sports/hockey/).

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# Bulldog softball enters conference play

Ferris softball sweeps Florida play, eye GLIAC schedule



Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics

Sophomore outfielder Ella McDonald has four runs and two hits in nine games this season.

**Nolan Matthews**  
Sports Reporter

Riding high off a six-game winning streak, Bulldog softball returns to Michigan for the start of GLIAC play.

After going undefeated in the USSSA Space Coast Spring Games in Florida, the Bulldogs begin conference matchups, with their first opponent being last year's GLIAC runner-ups, the Saginaw Valley State Cardinals.

Sophomore first baseman Alexis Kozlowski isn't surprised that the team is on a roll, stating they are prepared for what is ahead.

"Going into this week, we had confidence because we know what we are capable of," Kozlowski said. "So going 6-0 is not a surprise whatso-

ever, we are well prepared for GLIAC play and it is going to show."

The Bulldogs (11-5) will travel to Saginaw for their first matchup with the Cardinals (11-7). Saginaw Valley will be entering the outing on a four-game losing streak and the Bulldogs look to take advantage of that.

However, the Bulldogs can't take that for granted, as the Cardinals' pitching staff is the best in the GLIAC, allowing just 89 hits across their first 18 games alongside 114 strikeouts. The Bulldogs sit in second place, giving up 110 with just 48 strikeouts. Still, head coach Jake Schumann is confident his team can continue their momentum and take down Saginaw Valley.

"Every team in the GLIAC is tough, but Saginaw Valley has the pitching to be the pre-season favorite," Schumann said. "We talk to our girls about controlling what we do and that's staying present in the moment and taking one pitch at a time and passing the bat to the next Bulldog in the lineup. We don't change our offensive mindset based on who is pitching, rather we are in constant communication on how we can pass the bat from one at-bat to another."

The Bulldogs' offense has been clicking during their six-game winning streak, scoring three or more runs in every game. Sophomore outfielder Emma Gillard has been leading the charge with a .348 batting average, includ-

ing seven extra-base hits, a home run, 17 RBIs and a .587 slugging percentage.

Ferris' pitching rotation has held strong on the defensive end. During their win streak in Florida, the Bulldogs only allowed two or more runs twice. The star of the pitching staff has been junior Ella Covill-Marter, who has started three games during the streak, throwing a complete game shutout, allowing only three runs, striking out nine and giving up eight total hits.

After their matchup with the Cardinals, the Bulldogs will travel south to Detroit to take on the Wayne State Warriors. The Warriors (10-11) have a 38-30 record against the Bulldogs, but since 2022, the Warriors

have a 1-10 record versus Ferris.

The Warriors are led on offense by freshman first baseman Elly Koopman, who has a .417 batting average with three home runs, 21 RBIs and a .650 slugging percentage. While on the pitching side junior Grace Fisher leads the way for the Warriors, starting six games with a 3.15 ERA, 38 strikeouts, 18 walks and two complete games.

Schumann is very happy with how the season is going so far, enjoying how the offense has been clicking and how well the defense has played so far.

"Our offensive and defensive numbers are significantly higher, and our pitching numbers are sig-

nificantly lower than when I took over two years ago," Schumann said. "Last year's GLIAC Freshman of the Year Alexis Kozlowski continues her outstanding play both offensively and defensively, our pitching staff has been outstanding with Catherine O'Donohue leading the way with a sub-one ERA, with Covill-Marter and Cecelia Bell both with sub-three ERAs."

The Bulldogs face off against the Saginaw Valley State Cardinals in a doubleheader on Saturday, March 22 at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. in Saginaw. Then, they take on the Wayne State Warriors on March 23, starting at 12 p.m. and again at 2 p.m.

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